

Stages and the Virginia Alternate Assessment Process

OVERVIEW

Stages includes two major software components: (a) informal assessment software and (b) curriculum software. Stages informal assessment software is instructional in nature, providing activities with constructive feedback and opportunities for the learner to explore and choose. Stages curriculum software is a collection of interactive daily instructional programs appropriate for learners at each Stage.

Stages software enhances the Virginia's Alternate Assessment Process because:

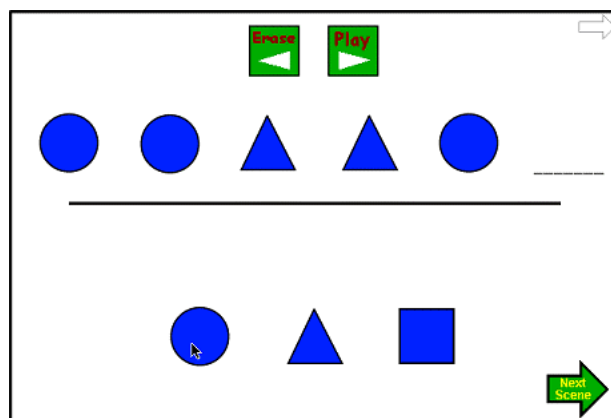
1. **Stages correlates with the content of Virginia Standards of Learning.**
2. **Stages generates primary data for the learner's Collection of Evidence.**
3. **Stages provides learners with the opportunity for increased independence.**
4. **Stages assists the learner's IEP and/or instructional teams with selecting assistive technology and assessment tools.**

1. Stages correlates with Virginia Standards of Learning.

Stages ensures meaningful and effective access to general curriculum areas. Stages content aligns with general education curriculum standards in K-3 mathematics and English, plus functional living skills such as identification of street signs. Please refer to the next section, "How Stages Correlates with Virginia Standards of Learning" for detailed matching between Stages informal assessment software and specific curriculum standards.

2. Stages generates primary data for the learner's Collection of Evidence.

During Stages software activities, the instructor can print directly from any screen to capture a learner-generated product. At the end of each activity, a report with instructional data about the time spent, choices made, response accuracy or work product, input method, prompt type, and time/date stamp are displayed with the learner's name. The instructional team member may wish to then print that screen or save the information as a text-format electronic file.



Example screen shot from Stage Four: Create Patterns

Observation guidelines and forms in the Stages kits help the instructional team make the most out of an activity session. The data-gathering features of the software enable the observer to focus on noting the learner's behavior and thinking-out-loud responses. Two adults from the instructional team can work together: one adult can encourage the learner and the other can note valuable data about behaviors without being noticed by the learner. Alternatively if a video or still camera is available, it may be directed at the learner and the computer monitor to discreetly record interactions and other behaviors while one adult coaches. Over time, the collected data will provide information that the instructional team needs to build a complete picture of the learner's skill achievement. During the sessions, the learner will be less conscious of her performance being recorded, making her responses more candid.

3. Stages provides learners with the opportunity for increased independence.

The feedback in Stages activities is encouraging and rewarding, providing a relaxed setting for exploring topics and demonstrating skills with minimal supervision. Many Stages activities include accessible choice-making opportunities. Functional skills activities include various community settings.

3. Stages assists the learner's IEP and/or instructional teams with selecting assistive technology and assessment tools.

An objective of Stages software is to provide several options for input methods and other settings so that the learner's IEP/instructional team can determine his ideal learning and communication environment. Different devices, auditory feedback, speeds and prompts are among the variables.

SUMMARY

Stages augments the Virginia alternative assessment cycle. The Stages software is a comprehensive tool to assist the instructional team in collecting valuable Collection of Evidence data, determine assessment strategy, and discover the learner's abilities and thinking approach.

How Stages Correlates with Virginia Standards of Learning¹

Mathematics Grades K-3 Content Strands and Standards

Strand 1: NUMBER AND NUMBER SENSE

- K.1** The student, given two sets containing 10 or fewer concrete items, will identify and describe one set as having more, fewer, or the same number of members as the other set, using the concept of 1 to 1 correspondence.
- K.2** The student, given a set containing nine or fewer concrete items, will
1. tell how many are in the set by counting the number of items orally;
 2. select the corresponding numeral from a given set
- K.6** The student will determine the value of the collection of pennies, using pennies or models.

Related Stages Assessment Activities:

Stage Four: Math Readiness: Counting, Number ID, Explore Compare, Assess Estimating
Stage Five: Math: Charts and Graphs, Fractions, Math Facts (+, -, x, ÷), Word Problems (+, -, x, ÷)
Stage Six: Explore and Assess: Counting Money

- 1.4** The student will recognize and write numerals 0 through 100.
1. The student identify and represent the concepts of one-half and one-fourth, using appropriate materials or a drawing.
 2. The student will count a collection of pennies, a collection of nickels, and a collection of dimes whose total value is 100 cents or less.

Related Stages Assessment Activities:

Stage Four: Math Readiness: Number ID
Stage Five: Math: Fractions
Stage Six: Explore and Assess: Counting Money

- 2.4** The student will identify the part of a set and/or region that represents one-half, one-third, one-fourth, [one-eighth, and one-tenth] and write the corresponding fraction.

Related Stages Assessment Activities:

Stage Five: Math: Fractions

- 3.5** The student will name and write the fractions represented by drawings or concrete materials and represent a given fraction, using concrete materials and symbols.

Related Stages Assessment Activities:

Stage Five: Math: Fractions

¹ Information found in Virginia Standards of Learning, Grades Kindergarten, One, Two, and Three (1995). Document source: <http://www.pen.k12.va.us/VDOE/Superintendent/Sols/home.shtml> (Accessed March 13, 2002).

Strand 2: COMPUTATION AND ESTIMATION

K.7 The student will add and subtract whole numbers using up to 10 concrete items.

Related Stages Assessment Activities:

Stage Five: Math: Math Facts (+, -)

1.8 The student will recall basic addition facts, sums to 10 or less, and the corresponding subtraction facts.

1.9 The student will solve story and picture problems involving one-step solutions, using basic addition and subtraction facts.

Related Stages Assessment Activities:

Stage Five: Math: Math Facts (+, -), Word Problems (+, -)

5. The student will recall basic addition facts, sums to 18 or less, and the corresponding subtraction facts.

2.11 The student will

- count, compare, and make change, using a collection of coins and one-dollar bills; and
- identify the correct usage of the [cent symbol,] dollar symbol, and decimal point.

Related Stages Assessment Activities:

Stage Five: Math: Math Facts (+, -)

Stage Six: Explore and Assess: Counting Money

3.9 The student will recall the multiplication and division facts through the nines table.

Related Stages Assessment Activities:

Stage Five: Math: Math Facts (\times , \div)

Strand 3: MEASUREMENT

K.9 The student will recognize a penny, nickel, dime, and quarter.

K.11 The student will tell time to the hour using an analog or digital clock.

K.12 The student will compare two objects or events, using direct comparisons or nonstandard units of measure, according to one or more of the following attributes: length (shorter, longer), height (taller, shorter), [weight (heavier, lighter), temperature (hotter, colder)].

Related Stages Assessment Activities:

Stage Four: Math Readiness: Explore Compare, Estimating

Stage Six: Explore: Telling Time, Using Money

Assess: Telling Time, Money Names

1.10 The student will identify the number of pennies equivalent to a nickel, a dime, and a quarter.

1.11 The student will tell time to the half-hour, using an analog or digital clock.

1.12 The student will use nonstandard units to measure length [and weight].

Related Stages Assessment Activities:

Stage Five: Math: Geometry

Stage Six: Explore: Telling Time, Using Money

Assess: Telling Time, Money Equivalents

2.13 The student, given grid paper, will estimate and then count the number of square units needed to cover a given surface (determine area).

2.14 The student will estimate and then count the number of cubes in a rectangular box (determine volume).

2.16 The student will tell and write time to the quarter hour, using analog and digital clocks.

Related Stages Assessment Activities:

Stage Four: Math: Geometry

Stage Six: Explore and Assess: Telling Time

3.15 The student will tell time to the nearest five-minute interval and to the nearest minute, using analog and digital clocks.

Related Stages Assessment Activities:

Stage Six: Explore and Assess: Telling Time

Strand 4: GEOMETRY

K.13 The student will identify, describe, [and make] plane geometric figures (circle, triangle, square, and rectangle).

K.14 The student will identify representations of plane geometric figures (circle, triangle, square, and rectangle), regardless of their position and orientation in space.

Related Stages Assessment Activities:

Stage Four: Shapes: Explore and Assess

1.15 The student will describe the proximity of objects in space (near, far, close by, below, up, down, beside, and next to).

1.17 The student will identify and describe objects in his/her environment that depict geometric figures: triangle, rectangle, square, and circle.

Related Stages Assessment Activities:

Stage Four: Math Readiness: Explore Compare, Spatial Relationships

Shapes: Explore and Assess

Strand 5: PROBABILITY AND STATISTICS

- 1.19** The student will interpret information displayed in a picture or object graph using the vocabulary: more, less, fewer, greater than, and less than.

Related Stages Assessment Activities:

Stage Five: Math: Charts and Graphs

- 2.21** The student will read, [construct,] and interpret a simple picture and bar graph.

Related Stages Assessment Activities:

Stage Five: Math: Charts and Graphs

- 3.22** The student will read and interpret data represent in bar and picture graphs.

Related Stages Assessment Activities:

Stage Five: Math: Charts and Graphs

Strand 6: PATTERNS, FUNCTIONS, AND ALGEBRA

- K.20** The student will identify, describe, and extend a repeating relationship (pattern) found in common objects, sounds, and movements.

Related Stages Assessment Activities:

Stage Four: Math Readiness: Continue/Fill-In Patterns

- 1.21** The student will recognize, describe, extend and create a wide variety of patterns, including rhythmic, color, shape, [and numeric].

Related Stages Assessment Activities:

Stage Four: Math Readiness: Continue/Fill-In Patterns, Create Patterns

- 2.25** The student will identify, create, and extend a wide variety of patterns using symbols and objects.

Related Stages Assessment Activities:

Stage Four: Math Readiness: Continue/Fill-In Patterns, Create Patterns

- 3.24** The student will recognize and describe patterns formed using concrete objects, tables, and pictures and extend the pattern.

- 3.25** The student will analyze a given pattern formed using concrete objects and pictures and then create a pattern with the same attributes.

Related Stages Assessment Activities:

Stage Four: Math Readiness: Continue/Fill-In Patterns, Create Patterns

English Grades K-3

Content Strands and Standards

Strand 1: ORAL LANGUAGE.

K.1 The student will demonstrate growth in the use of oral language.

Related Stages Assessment Activities:

Stage Two: Nouns, Verbs, Attributes

Stage Five: Reading: Explore Sounds

Stage Six: Stories: Cody, Mitchell, Meg, Adam, Ryan

Stage Two activities include photographs, drawings, symbols, videos and animation to introduce the learner to spoken words, word combinations, and sentences. The Stage Five *Explore Sounds* activity plays rhymes aloud with engaging animated sequences. Stage Six *Stories* are short passages with real-life settings and characters.

K.2 The student will use listening and speaking vocabularies (number words; people, places, and things; location, size, color, and shape; actions).

Related Stages Assessment Activities:

Stage Two: Nouns, Attributes

Stage Four: Math Readiness: Number ID

Stage Six: Stories: Cody, Mitchell, Meg, Adam, Ryan

Stage Two *Nouns* and *Attributes* activities include familiar things such as animals, vehicles, and toys. Object characteristics of color and size are also included. Learners can explore and demonstrate mastery of number words in the Stage Four *Number ID* activities.

1.1 The student will continue to demonstrate growth in the use of oral language.

1.2 The student will continue to expand and use listening and speaking vocabularies.

2.1 The student will demonstrate an understanding of oral language structure.

2.3 The student will use oral communication skills.

Related Stages Assessment Activities:

Stage Seven: Making Sentences: Building Sentences, Writing Sentences

Making Stories

The non-verbal learner can access text-to-speech capabilities and word wall or on-screen keyboard in Stage Seven activities to express ideas and responses.

Strand 2: READING/LITERATURE

K.5 The student will understand how print is organized and read.

1.5 The student will apply knowledge of how print is organized and read.

Related Stages Assessment Activities:

Stage Four: Reading Readiness: Letter Sounds

Stage Five: Reading: Explore Context

Stage Six: Stories: Cody, Mitchell, Meg, Adam, Ryan

Stage Seven: Making Words: High Frequency Words

Making Sentences: Building Sentences

In Stage Four *Letter Sounds*, sounds are played and the learner selects the corresponding letter.

Stage Five *Context* and Stage Seven *High Frequency Words* are short stories in scrapbook format.

As Stage Six *Stories* are read to the learner, text appears on the screen, so that the learner can associate the words with text. The learner has control over the “page turns” using his or her appropriate access device. Although the learner may not yet be constructing sentences, the Stage Seven *Building Sentences* word walls allow him or her to explore the sounds of words and their organization on a line using the text-to-speech capability.

K.7 The student will develop an understanding of basic phonetic principles.

1.6 The student will apply phonetic principles to read.

Related Stages Assessment Activities:

Stage Four: Reading Readiness: Letter Sounds

Stage Five: Reading: Sounds

Letter Sounds are fun to learn with the engaging yet simple animations accompanying these Stage Four activities. The learner explores pairs of rhyming words Stage Five *Sounds* activities before identifying them from several words on the screen.

K.8 The student will demonstrate comprehension of stories.

1.11 The student will read and comprehend a variety of fiction and nonfiction selections, i.e. write about what is read.

Related Stages Assessment Activities:

Stage Two: Nouns, Verbs, Attributes

Stage Five: Reading: Sounds

Stage Six: Stories: Cody, Mitchell, Meg, Adam, Ryan

Stage Seven: Making Words: Explore High Frequency Words

Making Stories

The learner can show comprehension of stories through verbal responses or observable behaviors.

After listening to stories read aloud or the Stage Six *Stories*, the learner can express his or her response to the characters or setting in this accessible activity. The learner can import a screen shot or related picture to serve as a writing prompt.

K.9 The student will identify both uppercase and lowercase letters of the alphabet.

Related Stages Assessment Activities:

Stage Four: Reading Readiness: Letter ID

The learner can explore letters in groups of six or seven, in alphabetical or shuffled order. The animations match those of the *Letter Sounds* activities.

1.7 The student will use meaning clues when reading.

2.5 The student will use meaning clues when reading.

Related Stages Assessment Activities:

Stage Five: Reading: Sounds, Meaning

Stage Six: Stories: Cody, Mitchell, Meg, Adam, Ryan

Picture clues help the learner read new vocabulary.

Strand 3: WRITING

K.12 The student will explore the uses of available technology for reading and writing.

Related Stages Assessment Activities:

Stage Six: Stories: Cody, Mitchell, Meg, Adam, Ryan

Stage Seven: Making Stories

Stage Six *Stories* and Stage Seven writing activities are accessible. The learner can read along with spoken text, independently read text silently, or just listen to the spoken text without captions as he or she advances from screen to screen. The accessible on-screen keyboard in Stage Seven gives the learner an opportunity to try different input methods to determine the most appropriate device to produce written work.

1.12 The student will write to communicate ideas.

2.9 The student will write stories, letters, and simple explanations.

2.10 The student will edit final copies for grammar, capitalization, punctuation, and spelling.

Related Stages Assessment Activities:

Stage Seven: Making Sentences: Spelling and Grammar

Making Stories

The Stage Seven *Spelling and Grammar* activity is a collection of spelling, homonyms, capitalization, noun-verb agreement, pronoun use, and word order activities. In addition, the instructor can create, save, and reuse custom sentence sets to cover punctuation or any other proofreading, editing, or rewriting skill. The learner can import a picture to focus on as a topic in the *Making Stories* activity.

Strand 4: RESEARCH

1.14 The student will alphabetize words according to the first letter.

Related Stages Assessment Activities:

Stage Five: Reading: Letters

Colorful line drawings illustrate this alphabetization activity.